

CRI ATTACKS A WOMAN RIDES THE BEAST

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The following article by Dave Hunt is from the Berean Call, May 1996. Hunt's timely, well-researched book *A Woman Rides the Beast*, is available from The Berean Call, P.O. Box 7019, Bend, Oregon 97708. (It is \$10.00.) It is very important to note that this book has been blacklisted by many Christian bookstores across the land. It is also blacklisted by some evangelical ministries such as Christian Research Institute, as we see from the following information from the Question and Answer section of the Berean Call--

QUESTION: Please listen to the enclosed audio tape of several Bible Answer Man broadcasts and respond to Hank Hanegraaff's statements that (1) your book, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, is pitifully unscholarly and revisionist history; (2) the Roman Catholic Church was the only Christian church in existence prior to the Reformation and therefore if it went into apostasy Christ's promise failed that the gates of hell would not prevail against the church; and (3) it is ludicrous to identify the Roman Catholic Church as the whore in Revelation 17. Could you respond in your newsletter?

ANSWER: I don't want to have a public quarrel with the Christian Research Institute [CRI]. However, I have been asked so many times by people such as yourself to respond to such charges by CRI that I feel I must do so at last.

I'm astonished that the book in question could be labeled "unscholarly." Check its more than 800 footnotes for yourself (which I doubt the critics have done) and note that the sources quoted are Roman Catholic councils, catechisms, codes, encyclopedias, their own historians and some respected non-Catholic historians. Then note whether all have been quoted accurately and in context--and reach your own conclusions.

As for it being "ludicrous to identify the Roman Catholic Church as the whore in Revelation 17," that same conviction was held by Martin Luther and all of the Reformers, plus the countless evangelical Christians martyred by Rome for 1,000 years before the Reformation. So in criticizing me, CRI is heaping ridicule upon the memory of millions of Reformers and martyrs!

Ever since the fourth century there have been multitudes of evangelical Christians who, out of conscience before God and in obedience to His Word, separated themselves from Rome and the papacy. Concerning them, Bishop Avignon, wrote grudgingly 300 years before the Reformation, "Considering the Papal Court has filled the whole Church with simony, and the consequent corruption of religion [that sounds like apostasy!], it is natural enough the heretics should call the Church the whore." (De Planct. Eccl. ii .28, cited in J. H. Ignaz von Dollinger, *The Pope and the Council* (London 1869), 185). Of course, Rome persecuted and killed these

evangelical "heretics." In referring to these martyrs, the great historian, Will Durant, wrote, "The Roman Church, they were sure, was the Whore of Babylon (Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (Simon and Schuster, 1950), 4:772).

Einerius, an inquisitor appointed by Pope Innocent III 350 years before the Reformation, said of the Waldensian Christians whom the Catholic Church was attempting to exterminate (their surviving churches are a major evangelical witness in Italy today), "They claim [that] the Roman Church is the whore described in John's Revelation." Even leading Roman Catholics said the same. St. Bonaventure, cardinal and general of the Franciscans, in his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, declared 300 years before the Reformation that Rome was "the harlot who makes kings and nations drunk with the wine of her whoredoms [i.e., the whore of Revelation 17]." The Reformers were certain of this and preached it and put it into their creeds. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, "I would not hesitate with the Reformers of the 16th century to [say that Roman Catholicism] is, as the Scripture puts it, 'the whore.'" It is rather shocking that CRI has the audacity to label ludicrous the firm conviction held almost universally by the evangelical church and its martyrs for fifteen centuries!

Furthermore, CRI's claim is false that "the Roman Catholic Church was the only Christian church in existence prior to the Reformation, and therefore if it went into apostasy Christ's promise that the gates of hell would not prevail against the church failed." On the contrary, it was not the Roman Catholic Church but those she martyred who were the real church throughout history. Martin Luther himself said, "We are not the first to declare the papacy to be the kingdom of Antichrist, since for many years before us so many and such great men (whose number is large and whose memory is eternal) have undertaken to express the same thing so clearly and plainly." (Plass, *What Luther Says*, 1:36).

If prior to the Reformation, as CRI claims (echoing the Catholic apologists, whom they admire and praise), Roman Catholicism was the true church which Christ founded, then who were the "many and such great men (whose number is large and whose memory is eternal)" to whom Martin Luther referred as having stood against Rome "for many years before" him? And who were those "heretics" and martyrs hundreds of years before the Reformation to whom Will Durant, the Inquisitor Einerius and Bishop Alvaro Palayo (and others we don't have space to quote) referred? And to take it back even further, to whom did the "Edict of the Emperors Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I" of February 27, 380, refer as the "others" who were obviously non-Catholics? In part the edict said:

"We order those who follow this doctrine to receive the title of Catholic Christians, but others we judge to be mad and raving and worthy of incurring the disgrace of heretical teaching, nor are their assemblies to receive the name of churches. They are to be punished not only by Divine retribution but also by our own measures, which we have decided in accordance with Divine inspiration." (Sidney Z. Ehler and John B. Morrall, *Church and State Through the Centuries: A Collection of historic documents with commentaries* (London, 1954), p.7).

Clearly, already in A.D. 380 there were "assemblies" of Christians who claimed to be "churches" independent of Rome. Indeed, the Albigenses and Waldenses traced their heritage back for many centuries and declared not only that Rome was the whore but that they and other believers independent of Rome were "the true church." E.H. Broadbent calls these Bible believing Christians The Pilgrim Church in his book of that name:

"In the Alpine valleys of Piedmont there had been for centuries [prior to the twelfth century] congregations of believers calling themselves brethren, who came later to be widely known as Waldenses, or Vaudois. ... In the South of France ... the congregations of believers who met apart from the Catholic Church were numerous and increasing. They are often called Albigenses [and] had intimate connections with the brethren--whether called Waldenses, Poor Men of Lyons, Bogomils, or otherwise--in the surrounding countries, where [non-Catholic] churches spread among the various peoples."

It took more than 100 years to all but exterminate these believers several centuries before the Reformation. CRI believes and promulgates the false charges of heresy, Manicheanism, etc. which the Roman Catholic Church (to justify their slaughter) has leveled against these evangelicals. They were true Christians, and are described as such in Halley's Bible Handbook and Foxes Book of Martyrs. Abraham Mellinus, in his History of the Persecutions and Martyrs published in 1619, writes that the Albigenses and Waldenses were sometimes called Catharists and held the same creed and though called heretics were "pious, upright and moral people."

Mellinus tells us that the creed titled "Confession of the Waldenses and Albigenses" was read in the Parliament of the King of France in Paris, was orthodox and contained nothing to support the false charges Rome made against them. Having cited their creed, Mellinus says, 'Thus far extends the confession of the faith of the Waldenses and Albigenses which confession we have placed at the close of the 12th century [400 years before the Reformation] in order to anticipate and refute all the shameful doctrines which have been unjustly imputed, not only to the Waldenses... but particularly also to the Albigenses as though they had been Manicheans."

As for "revisionist history," it is not I but the Roman Catholic Church which has engaged in revision in order to justify its persecution and martyrdom of these evangelical representatives of the true church. Unfortunately, CRI and others who have not done the necessary research have believed Rome and promote its falsehoods. They owe an apology not to me but to the Reformers and martyrs (Dave Hunt, The Berean Call, May 1996).